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THE

T R I A L

OF

Mrs. Lydia Sheridan,

WIFE OF

MAJOR HENRY SHERIDAN,

FOR

A D U L T E R Y

WITH

FRANCIS NEWMAN, Esq.

TRIED IN THE

Bishop of London's Court, Doctor's Commons.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR E. BENTLY, N^o. 22, FETTER LANE.

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PRINTED FOR E. BENTLEY, No. 32, FETTER LANE.

THE
T R I A L
OF
LYDIA SHERIDAN,
FOR ADULTERY.

May 23, 1787.

The Deposition of Thomas Sell.

THOMAS SELL, at No. 1; Green's Row, in the Parish of St. Luke, Chelsea, in the county of Middlesex, gardener, aged twenty-five years, a witness produced and sworn.

To the seventh and eighth articles of the said libel this deponent saith, That on or about the second of November, in the year one thousand seven hundred and eighty-four, he went to live with Mrs. Sarah Barker, at her house in Green's Row, Chelsea, in the capacity of gardner, and hath continued in her service ever since; that at the time this deponent so went to live with the said Mrs. Barker, the articulate Fran-

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cis Newman, Esquire, and a lady, whom this deponent then understood to be the wife of the said Francis Newman, lodged and boarded with the said Mrs. Barker, and continued so to do till about the latter end of the said month of November, when they left Mrs. Barker, and went and lodged, as this deponent understood from their servant, Christopher Wagener, at Osborne's Hotel in the Adelphi; that some time in or about the month of February following, the said Francis Newman, Esquire, and such lady, returned to the said Mrs. Barker's, and continued to lodge and board with her until some time in or about the month of April following, for the space of ten weeks, or thereabouts, when they entirely left Mrs. Barker, and set off for France, as this deponent gathered from their conversation, and where they have ever since resided, as this deponent hath been credibly informed, and verily believes; that before the said Francis Newman and such lady came to live with the said Mrs. Barker the second time, this deponent, in conversation with their servant, the said Christopher Wagener, learnt that such lady was not the wife of the said Francis Newman, but the wife of some other gentleman; and about a twelvemonth afterwards this deponent was informed that the name of such lady was Sheridan, but this deponent can say nothing thereto of his own knowledge; that during the time the said Francis Newman and such lady lodged and boarded at the house of the said Mrs. Barker, as before-mentioned, they lived and cohabited together, and passed as man and wife; and this deponent has frequently, at night, seen them retire to their bed-chamber in such house, in which bed-chamber was only one bed, and such lady went, and was addressed by the name of Newman, and this deponent had not the least suspicion, until he was informed to the contrary, as before-mentioned, but that

that the said Francis Newman and such lady were man and wife ; and further to the said articles he knows not to depose.

THOMAS SELL.

The same Witness on Interrogatories.

To the first interrogatory he answers, That he came to be examined as a witness in this cause at the desire of the producent's proctor, but hath had no meeting or consultations as interrogate.

To the second interrogatory he answers, he hath not been taught or instructed as interrogate.

To the third interrogatory he answers, that he has no knowledge of the producent ; that from what he hath heard, he has every reason to believe that the lady who lived and cohabited with Francis Newman, Esquire, as particularly mentioned in his aforegoing deposition, was, and is, Lydia Sheridan, the party proceeded in this cause ; but the respondent hath no other knowledge of her.

To the fourth interrogatory he answers, that he was never at Lisle as interrogate, or in any other parts beyond the sea.

To the fifth interrogatory he answers, that he is a stranger to the interrogate Elizabeth Ruffel, and knows not to answer to the said interrogatory.

THOMAS SELL.

Nov. 22, 1787.

The Deposition of Sarah Barker.

SARAH BARKER, (wife of Samuel Barker) of N. Green's Row, in the parish of St. Luke, Chelsea, in the county of Middlesex, aged thirty-one years, a witness produced and sworn.

To the seventh and eighth articles of the said libel this deponent saith, That some time in or about the month of November, 1784, a servant of the articulate Francis Newman, Esquire, by name Christopher Wagener, applied to this deponent, at her house in Green's Row, Chelsea, respecting some apartments she had to let in the said house for his master and mistress, whom he described to be people of fortune; that this deponent, wishing to see what sort of people they were, before she made any agreement, the said Christopher Wagener informed her they were for the present at Lowerback's Hotel, in St. James's-street; that this deponent waited upon them there, and being satisfied with their appearance, she agreed to let them such apartments, and also to board them; and the said Francis Newman and such lady came and occupied them the next day, and continued so to do for about nine weeks, and then left them for some short time, but returned and continued to occupy them for about ten weeks longer, until on or about the twenty-ninth of April, 1785, when they finally left them, and set off for Faance; that until about a day or two before they left such apartments the first time, this deponent looked upon them to be husband and wife; and the means by which

which she came to know the contrary was, the said Francis Newman having absented himself from such lady two or three days, at which she became so much agitated, that the deponent was fearful of leaving her alone, and this deponent at length drew from her a confession that she was not married to Mr. Newman; and upon this deponent the next day questioning the said Christopher Wagener thereon, and asking him how he could think of imposing upon her, he said, that telling the deponent that his master, the said Mr. Newman, and such lady, were both married, he had told no untruth, for that they were married; the said lady to an officer in the army, by name Sheridan, by whom she had two children living; and his master, the said Mr. Newman, to another lady; and upon hinting the matter to such lady afterwards, and that she the deponent knew the whole affair, she confessed it was very true, that her real name was Sheridan, and that her husband, Major Sheridan, was in the army, and that she had two children by him; and she would, afterwards, frequently converse to the deponent about her said children; and the night before she quitted the deponent's house the last time, this deponent saw, by chance, a letter in the hand-writing of such lady, wherein she mentioned several particulars respecting her said children, and such letter was signed "Lydia Sheridan" also in the hand-writing of such lady, and whose hand-writing this deponent well knew, by having frequently seen her write, and having received letters from her; that at such time that the said Mr. Newman and such lady so occupied the deponent's apartments, they in all respects cohabited together as husband and wife, and behaved to each other with that sort of familiarity as if they had been really so; and though this deponent never saw them actually in bed together, until herein after mentioned, yet this deponent is certain they slept together each night in one and the same bed, by reason that

thas she has repeatedly seen them at night retire to the same bed-chamber, and has, at times, seen the one in bed while the other has been undressing in such bed-chamber, and this deponent verily believes they had the carnal knowledge of each other; and further she knows not to depose to the said articles.

To the eleventh article of the said libel this deponent saith That in consequence of many pressing invitations, by letter, from such lady, this deponent, in or about the month of July, 1786, went on a visit to her at Moulines in France, and continued with her on such visit for about four months, during which time the said Francis Newman, Esquire, and such lady, still cohabited together as husband and wife; and the day after the deponent's arrival at their apartments, about twelve miles from Moulines, the said lady was, in the deponent's presence, delivered of a male child; that while the deponent was on such visit, she made a little excursion with the said Mr. Newman and such lady in the country, and upon the road this deponent slept in a two-bedded room with them, and saw them in bed together; and after such lady recovered of her lying-in, this deponent is convinced, as well by seeing them retire into the same bed-chamber, as from their daily conversation and behaviour, that they constantly slept in one and the same bed, and this deponent has overheard them conversing when they have been in bed together, and this deponent has frequently heard them acknowledge the before-mentioned child to be their child, and speak of its being like him, the said Mr. Newman, and the said lady constantly went by the name of Mrs. Newman, and at Moulines they were constantly looked upon and treated, and addressed as man and wife, and acknowledged each other as such; and from letters this deponent has lately received by the foreign post from such lady, this deponent understands and believes they

they still live and cohabit together at some place in the kingdom of France; and this deponent saith, that the last time the said Mr. Newman and such lady lived at the deponent's house, as before deposed, the said lady seemed under continual apprehension, and repeatedly gave the deponent strict charge, that if Major Sheridan, or any strange gentleman, should enquire for her, to say that she, the deponent, knew nothing about her, from which circumstances, and from what the deponent hath before deposed, this deponent is well assured in her own mind, and firmly believes, that such lady is Lydia Sheridan, the wife of Major Sheridan, the party proceeded against in this cause; and further she knows not to depose to the said article.

The same Witness on Interrogatories.

To the first interrogatory she answers, she comes to be examined at the request of Mr. Jones, of Doctor's Commons, but she hath had no consultations as intertrogate.

To the second interrogatory she answers, that she hath not been taught or instructed as interrogate.

To the third interrogatory she answers, that between two and three months ago, a gentleman called upon her respecting this cause, and the respondent has since been informed by letter, such gentleman was Major Sheridan, party in this cause, but this respondent hath no other knowledge of him; that this respondent's acquaintance with the lady, respecting whom she has been examined, and whom, from various circumstances, the respondent is convinced is Lydia Sheridan, the party pro-

proceeded against in this cause, arose, as mentioned in her deposition, referring to which, she cannot farther answer.

To the fourth interrogatory she answers, that she hath fully deposed to the matters enquired after by the said interrogatory in her afore-going deposition, referring to which, she cannot further answer.

To the fifth interrogatory she answers, she is a stranger to the interrogate, Elizabeth Russell, and to the matters enquired after by the said interrogatory.

SARAH BARKER.

November 30, 1787.

The Deposition of William Loveridge.

WILLIAM LOVERIDGE, of Austin Friars, London, gentleman, aged forty-one years, a witness produced and sworn.

To the eleventh article of the said libel this deponent saith, That he is the solicitor in this cause on behalf of Henry Fortich Sheridan, Esquire, the producent, and came first to know him about the latter end of the year one thousand seven hundred and eighty-five, or beginning of the year one thousand seven hundred and eighty-six, by applying to the deponent to consult him, amongst other things, respecting the conduct of his wife, Lydia Sheridan, the other party in this cause, who, as he informed the deponent, had, during his the producent's absence upon his duty in America, contracted an adulterous correspondence with a gentleman, by name Francis Newman, and that about the time of his the producent's return from America,

merica, they had left England and gone to France, but that he had not been able to learn into what part of France they had retired; that this deponent recommended him to continue his enquiries, and said he would also set on foot an enquiry, and did not doubt but that in time he should be able to find out in what part of France they were; that this deponent accordingly prosecuted his enquiries, but without effect, till about the end of February last, when he was informed by the producent, that he had discovered that Sir Richard Hoare and Company were the bankers and correspondents of the said Mr. Newman, and he directed this deponent to enquire of the house of the said Sir Richard Hoare and Company the place of residence of the said Mr. Newman; that this deponent accordingly made such enquiry, and was informed by them that they directed all their letters to the said Mr. Newman at the house of Monsieur Perregaux, banker at Paris; that this deponent thereupon ordered the usual citation to issue against the said Lydia Sheridan, in a cause of divorce, by reason of adultery; and having procured the same under seal, he proceeded to Paris, and on his arrival there, he applied to the said Monsieur Perregaux to be informed of the residence of Francis Newman, Esquire, and being informed by him, that he the said Francis Newman was then resident at Moulines or Bourbonnois, this deponent went thither, and enquiring for him by such name, was informed of his residence, and that he passed as a married man, and lived with his lady; that this deponent waited upon him, and inquiring for Lydia Sheridan, the said Francis Newman appeared much embarrassed, and said she was not with him, and that he knew no such person; that this deponent then said, that he had not travelled all the way from London without first obtaining certain information of the contrary, and that if he, Mr. Newman, persisted in such denial, and to prevent this deponent

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seeing her, he should be under the necessity of leaving the process he had brought to serve upon her, with some proper officer at Moulins, and direct him to do the business, by which means it would become generally known that he and the said Lydia Sheridan were not man and wife, and thereby much expose them, as he the deponent understood they passed as such, and were visited by the principal people of the place, or this deponent expressed himself to that effect; that this conversation seemed to weigh very much with the said Mr. Newman, and after pausing some little time, he at length acknowledged that the said Lydia Sheridan then lived with him, and that if the deponent would call upon him again in about an hour, he should see her; that this deponent did call upon him again about that time, and he then introduced to the deponent a lady, who he informed him was Mrs. Sheridan; that this deponent addressed himself to her, and asked her if her name was Lydia Sheridan, and if she was the wife of Major Sheridan, the producent in this cause? to which she replied in the affirmative; and this deponent thereupon served her with such citation; that the said Mr. Newman then asked the deponent to stay and dine with him and Mrs. Sheridan, to which this deponent consented, and after dinner, in conversation with them, they acknowledged they had cohabited together as man and wife for some years, and had a child, which they shewed the deponent, and which appeared about six or seven months old; and the said Mrs. Sheridan repeatedly in conversation said she was determined to live and die with the said Mr. Newman, and never again live with her husband, the said Major Sheridan; and this deponent saith, that they, the said Mr. Newman and Mrs. Sheridan, in all respects behaved to each other as man and wife, and were so treated by their servants; and this deponent further saith, that he continued at Moulins two days, during which he was several times with

with the said Mr. Newman and Mrs. Sheridan, and they both repeatedly entreated the deponent not to divulge their situation, for that they were looked upon as husband and wife at Moulines, and visited, and were visited, by the principal people of the place; and this deponent lastly saith, that from what he hath before deposed, he doth verily believe that the lady of whom he hath now deposed, and Lydia Sheridan, (wife of the said Major Sheridan) the party produced against in this cause, was and is one and the same person, and not divers; and further he knows not to depose to the said articles.

The same Witness on Interrogatories

To the first interrogatory he answers, that he comes to be examined as a witness in this cause at the request of the producent, but hath had no meetings or consultations as interrogate.

To the second interrogatory he answers, that he hath not been taught or instructed as interrogate.

To the third interrogatory he answers, he hath, in his aforegoing deposition, set forth his knowledge of the parties in this cause, referring to which he knows not further to answer.

To the fourth interrogatory he answers, that he was never at at Lisle in French Flanders, and further he cannot answer.

To the fifth interrogatory he answers, that he is a stranger to the interrogate Elizabet Ruffel, and cannot answer to the said interrogatory.

WILLIAM LOVERIDGE.

February 27, 1788.

The Deposition of James Brewer.

JAMES BREWER, master of the inn known by the name of the Swan and Two Necks, in Ladlane, London, aged thirty-six years, a witness produced and sworn.

To the third article of the said allegation the deponent saith, that from about the year 1780, until about the year 1785, this deponent kept an inn at Plymouth, in the county of Devon, known by the name of the London Inn; that this deponent was born at Bampton in the said county of Devon, and from his birth, until within the last three years, he this deponent had his residence in such county, by which means, and his public line of life, he had some knowledge of most of the principal families who lived in such county; that this deponent had a more particular knowledge of the chief families residing at Tiverton, in the said county, by the deponent's having married his wife from thence, and its not being above seven miles from his native place; and this deponent further saith, that about eight or nine months ago, he this deponent was pretty much at Tiverton, and by that means came to have a personal knowledge of a Mrs. Fergusone and family, who then resided there; that her family consisted of Captain Fergusone her son, and several daughters, one of whom, the deponent was informed, was married to a Mr. Sheridan, an officer in the army, add as they occasionally passed by in the street, the lady who had married Mr. Sheridan, was pointed out to the deponent, by which means the deponent came to be acquainted with her

her person ; and this deponent further saith, that in the summer of the year before the conclusion of the last war, there being several regiments encamped in the neighbourhood of Plymouth, the said Captain Fergusone, Mrs. Sheridan, and the two Miss Fergusone's her sisters, came to the deponent's house, the London Inn, situate in Plymouth, and continued there a week; and the deponent thereby came to have a more particular knowledge of the said Mrs. Sheridan and from general conversation this deponent understood her husband, Mr. Sheridan, was abroad on his duty, as an officer in the King's service ; and this deponent saith, that her said brother and sisters addressed and spoke of her as Mrs. Sheridan, and as far as this deponent ever heard, she was generally looked upon and esteemed to be the wife of the said Mr. Sheridan amongst all her acquaintance, and this deponent understood she hath had two children by him, who were then living ; and further to the said article he knows not to depose.

To the sixth article of the said libel this deponent saith, That about three years ago, to the best of his recollection, he was credibly informed that the said Mrs. Sheridan had left Tiverton, and had eloped and gone to France with one Mr. Newman, a gentleman of Tiverton, whom this deponent had before heard of by name, but had then no knowledge of ; and this deponent further saith, that he well knows Henry Fortick Sheridan, Esquire, the producent in this cause, and came to know him about two years ago, by his frequenting the Carleton Coffee-house and Hotel, situate in Pall Mall, which this deponent kept until last Christmas ; that in the course of conversation with the deponent, the said Mr. Sheridan, understanding the deponent had come from the neighbourhood of Tiverton, asked him if he knew Mrs. Sheridan, and what was become of her ? and the deponent informed him he knew

knew her very well, and then mentioned what he had heard respecting her elopement; and the said Mr. Sheridan then gave the deponent to understand, that he was the husband of the said Mrs. Sheridan, a circumstance this deponent before knew from his the deponent's wife's information, who knew the said Mr. Sheridan when he lived at Tiverton; and this deponent further saith, that the said Mr. Sheridan hath, from time to time, conversed with the deponent respecting the conduct of his said wife, and his having instituted the present suit against her; and about a fortnight since he called upon the deponent in Lad-lane, informing the deponent that Mrs. Sheridan and Mr. Newman lived at lodgings in a house in Brompton-row, Hyde Park, he requested, as a particular favour, that this deponent would take an opportunity of calling upon them there, that the deponent might identify the said Mrs. Sheridan, and see her with the said Mr. Newman; that this deponent accordingly, on the twentieth of this month, went to a house in Brompton-row, and enquiring for a Mr. Newman, was introduced to a gentleman, who acknowledged his name to be Newman, and this deponent then, and there saw with him, the aforesaid Mrs. Sheridan, whom this deponent came to know as before deposed, and the deponent spoke to and addressed her as Mrs. Sheridan, in which she acquiesced, and after asking her if she had any commands in Devonshire? to which she replied in the negative, this deponent took his leave and went away; and this deponent lastly saith, from what he hath before deposed, he does believe that Mrs. Sheridan, of whom he has now deposed, and Lydia Sheridan (the wife of Henry Fortick Sheridan) the party proceeded against in this cause, was and is one and the same person.

JAMES BREWER.

March 11th, 1788.

The Deposition of Martha Brewer.

MARTHA BREWER, (wife of James Brewer) of Lad-lane, London, aged thirty-four years, a witness produced and sworn.

To the third and sixth article of the said libel this deponent saith, That she was born at Tiverton in the county of Devon, and resided there until within the last ten years, when the deponent intermarried with her present husband, James Brewer, and went to live at Exeter in the same county; that about four or five years before the deponent left Tiverton, Captain Sheridan, now Major Sheridan, and Mrs. Sheridan his wife, the parties in this cause, came to live and reside there, and the deponent by that means came personally to know them; that they lived with Mrs. Fergusone, the mother of the said Mrs. Sheridan, and so continued to do for two or three years, when Major Sheridan, being an officer in the army, was, as this deponent understood, ordered on service abroad; that Mrs. Sheridan still continued to live with her said mother when this deponent left Tiverton, as aforesaid; and about three years afterwards, this deponent and her said husband, being at that time removed from Exeter to Plymouth, where they kept an inn, known by the name of the London, Inn, the said Mrs. Sheridan, accompanied by her brother, Captain Fergusone, and two of her sisters, came to such inn, and continued there for several days, the occasion of which, this deponent believes, was chiefly to see the encampments in the neighbourhood

hood of Plymouth ; that from the time of this deponent's said marriage, this deponent has occasionally visited her friends at Tiverton up to the present time, and believes she might several times see Mrs. Sheridan there, after she and her said brother and sister came to Plymouth as aforesaid ; but about three years ago, this deponent being at Tiverton, or in the neighbourhood thereof, was credibly informed, and believes, that Mrs. Sheridan had left Tiverton, and eloped with a gentleman of the name of Newman, who, she understood, had for some short time resided there, and that they had gone to France, and this deponent never saw her afterwards ; and this deponent further saith, that she and her said husband kept the Carleton Coffee-house and Hotel, in Pall Mall, London, from about August, 1785, until about Christmas, 1787 ; and during the time they so kept the same, Major Sheridan very much frequented the same, and understanding the deponent had come from Tiverton, or, as the deponent believes, recollecting the deponent's living there, he once or twice questioned the deponent respecting his wife, the said Mrs. Sheridan, and desired the deponent to write to her brother at Tiverton, to know if he had heard any thing respecting her, and this deponent did accordingly write to her said brother, who sent her for answer, that Mrs. Sheridan and Mr. Newman had not returned to Tiverton, and that he had heard nothing respecting them, from the time of their elopement, but that they had gone to France, and still continued there ; and this deponent lastly saith that during the time they, the said Major Sheridan and Mrs. Sheridan his wife, so resided at Tiverton, until Major Sheridan went abroad on his duty, as before-mentioned, they lived and cohabited together at the house of Mrs. Fergusone, the mother of the said Mrs. Sheridan, in all respects, as this deponent believes, as lawful husband wife, and upon all occasions, as far as this deponent ever knew, owned and

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acknowledged each other as such, and were, and are, as this deponent believes, so commonly accounted, reputed, and taken to be, by and amongst their relations, friends, and acquaintance; and by their said marriage, this deponent understood, they had two children, one of whom, a boy, this deponent remembers seeing when they first came to live at Tiverton.

MARTHA BREWER.

SENTENCE.

Upon hearing the depositions in this cause, it was decreed and adjudged, that Mrs. Lydia Sheridan be divorced from bed, board, and mutual cohabitation with Major Sheridan, her husband, by reason of adultery.

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acknowledged each other as such, and were, and are, as
 this deponent believes, to commonly accounted, reputed,
 and taken to be, by and amongst their relations, friends,
 and acquaintance; and by their said marriage, this de-
 ponent understood, they had two children, one of
 whom, a boy, this deponent remembers seeing when
 they first came to live at Tiverton.

MARTHA BRIDGER.

STATEMENT.

Upon hearing the deponents in this case, it was
 stated and admitted, that Miss Lydia Stoddard be-
 lieved from her board and mutual conversation with
 Major Stoddard, the husband, by reason of adultery.

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